

E. J. BROOKS & ASSOCIATES, PLLC

**UNITED STATES PATENT APPLICATION**

**COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY**

As a below named inventor I hereby declare that: my residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name; that

I verily believe I am the original, first and joint inventor of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled: **BENEFIT MANAGEMENT**

The specification of which is attached hereto.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referenced above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the patentability of this application in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.56 (attached hereto). I also acknowledge my duty to disclose all information known to be material to patentability which became available between a filing date of a prior application and the national or PCT international filing date in the event this is a Continuation-in-Part application in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.63(e).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d) or 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or 365(a) of any PCT international application which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on the basis of which priority date is claimed:

**No such claim for priority is being made at this time.**

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. §119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below:

**No such claim for priority is being made at this time.**

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 120 or 365(c) of any United States and PCT international application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of the application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT international application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in 37 C.F.R. §1.56(a) which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

**No such claim for priority is being made at this time.**

I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or patent agent(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected herewith:

Edward J. Brooks III	Reg. No. 40,925
Jeffery L. Cameron	Reg. No. 43,527
Joseph C. Huebsch	Reg. No. 42,673

I hereby authorize them to act and rely on instructions from and communicate directly with the person/assignee/attorney/firm/organization/who/which/first sends/sent this case to them and by whom/which I hereby declare that I have consented after full disclosure to be represented unless/until I instruct E. J. Brooks & Associates to the contrary.

Please direct all correspondence in this case to **E. J. Brooks & Associates, PLLC** at the address indicated below:

**1221 Nicollet Avenue, Suite 500 Minneapolis, MN 55403**  
**Telephone: (612) 659-9340 Fax: (612) 659-9344**

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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that wilful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such wilful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full Name of joint inventor number 1: **Peter J. Kaehler**  
Citizenship: **United States of America** Residence: Hudson, WI  
Post Office Address: 1502 Hunter Hill Road  
Hudson, WI 54016

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Peter J. Kaehler

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

10/15/03

Full Name of joint inventor number 2: **John L. Erickson**  
Citizenship: **United States of America** Residence: Plymouth, MN  
Post Office Address: 12055 49th Place North  
Plymouth, MN 54422

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

John L. Erickson

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name of joint inventor number 3: **Leonard R. Steidel**  
Citizenship: **United States of America** Residence: Prior Lake, MN  
Post Office Address: 3755 Island View Circle  
Prior Lake, MN 55372

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Leonard R. Steidel

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name of joint inventor number 4: **Peter L. Hauser**  
Citizenship: **United States of America** Residence: Lakeville, MN  
Post Office Address: 16913 Kings Court  
Lakeville, MN 55044

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Peter L. Hauser

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

§ 1.56 Duty to Disclose information material to patentability

(a) A patent by its very nature is affected with a public interest. The public interest is best served, and the most effective patent examination occurs when, at the time an application is examined, the Office is aware of and evaluates the teachings of all information material to patentability. Each individual associated with the filing and prosecution of a patent application has a duty of candor and good faith in dealing with the Office, which includes a duty to disclose to the Office all information known to that individual to be material to patentability as defined in this section. The duty to disclose information exists with respect to each pending claim until the claim is cancelled or withdrawn from consideration, or the application becomes abandoned. Information material to the patentability of a claim that is cancelled or withdrawn from consideration need not be submitted if the information is not material to the patentability of any claim remaining under consideration in the application. There is no duty to submit information which is not material to the patentability of any existing claim. The duty to disclose all information known to be material to patentability is deemed to be satisfied if all information known to be material to patentability of any claims issued in a patent was cited by the Office or submitted to the Office in the manner prescribed by §§ 1.97(b)-(d) and 1.98. However, no patent will be granted on an application in connection with which fraud on the Office was practiced or attempted or the duty of disclosure was violated through bad faith or intentional misconduct. The Office encourages applicants to carefully examine:

- (1) prior art cited in search reports of a foreign patent office in counterpart application, and
- (2) the closest information over which individuals associated with the filing or prosecution of a patent application believe any pending claim patentably defines, to make sure that any material information contained therein is disclosed to the Office.

(b) Under this section, information is material to patentability when it is not cumulative to information already of record or being made of record in the application, and

- (1) It establishes, by itself or in combination with other information, a prima facie case or unpatentability of a claim; or
- (2) It refutes or is inconsistent with, a position the applicant takes in:
  - (i) Opposing an argument of unpatentability relied on by the Office, or
  - (ii) Asserting an argument of patentability.

A prima facie case of unpatentability is established when the information compels a conclusion that a claim is unpatentable under the preponderance of evidence, burden-of-proof standard, giving each term in the claim its broadest reasonable construction consistent with the specification, and before any consideration is given to evidence which may be submitted in an attempt to establish a contrary conclusion of patentability.

(c) Individuals associated with the filing or prosecution of a patent application within the meaning of this section are:

- (1) Each inventor named in the application;
  - (2) Each attorney or agent who prepares or prosecutes the application; and
  - (3) Every other person who is substantively involved in the preparation or prosecution of the application and who is associated with the inventor, with the assignee, or with anyone to whom there is an obligation to assign the application.
- (d) Individuals other than the attorney, agent, or inventor may comply with this section by disclosing information to the attorney, agent, or inventor.

E. J. BROOKS & ASSOCIATES, PLLC

**UNITED STATES PATENT APPLICATION**

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Attorney Docket No.: 110.0010001  
Serial No.: N/A  
Filing Date: Herewith

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**No such claim for priority is being made at this time.**

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Signature:  Date: 10/15/03  
Leonard R. Steidel

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Full Name of joint inventor number 4: Peter L. Hauser  
Citizenship: United States of America Residence: Lakeville, MN  
Post Office Address: 16913 Kings Court  
Lakeville, MN 55044

Attorney Docket No.: 110.0010001

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Serial No.: N/A

Filing Date: Herewith

Signature:

  
Peter L. Hauser

Date:

10/15/03

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- (2) Each attorney or agent who prepares or prosecutes the application; and

(3) Every other person who is substantively involved in the preparation or prosecution of the application and who is associated with the inventor, with the assignee, or with anyone to whom there is an obligation to assign the application.

Attorney Docket No.: 110.0010001

Serial No.: N/A

Filing Date: Herewith

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(d) Individuals other than the attorney, agent, or inventor may comply with this section by disclosing information to the attorney, agent, or inventor.